

Adequate Public Facilities Standards
Rockville, Maryland

Public Hearing Draft

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I. Introduction

One of the goals of the Mayor and Council Strategic Plan for 2005-10 is the adoption of an adequate public facilities provision in the Zoning Ordinance. The following document, in conjunction with a proposed text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, will establish procedures and standards necessary to ensure that adequate public facilities and services are provided concurrent with new development and redevelopment.

The Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) tests the capacity of public facilities based on current and projected data available at the time of development application, as outlined in Table I. Net available system capacities¹ will change as 1) new projects come into the system, 2) other projects are completed, 3) some projects are abandoned, and 4) new facilities are programmed in capital budgets. APFO provisions are integrated into the development review process to establish a benchmark for the availability of capacity at the time of project review. Once a development project is approved, capacity of public facilities required by that project is reserved, provided the project remains on its service commitment, as determined at the time of project approval.

The Mayor and Council has developed the following mission statement to guide administration of the APFO:

The City of Rockville is experiencing substantial interest in redevelopment of older areas into mixed use, dynamic centers. This pressure has raised concerns regarding public infrastructure capacity because of the expected increase in commercial/office square footage and residential dwelling units. The Mayor and Council have expressly stated that they want to provide opportunities to revitalize certain areas of the city in insure that all attributes needed for modern urban living are provided. Additionally, they want to provide for long term economic vitality.

It is the will of the Mayor and Council to adopt an adequate public facilities ordinance (APFO), a tool to balance new redevelopment with the provision of adequate facilities for current and new residents and businesses. Its purpose is to support redevelopment, by insuring that the requisite infrastructure is available to serve existing and expected future development. It seeks to provide a clear and dependable schedule of capital investment and facility capacity, and allow developers to mitigate the impact of their development projects while limiting undesirable consequences. Further, it provides a commitment to program additional capacity and to fund those improvements.

The APFO will be applied to all development projects Adequacy shall first be considered at the earliest stage in the application process so as to assure adequacy of public facilities for the project and to provide guidance to the applicant as to how the APFO requirements can be met if deficiencies are identified.

¹ Net available system capacity is the total amount of capacity minus all existing background development, development with building permits, and development approved but not yet permitted.

TABLE I: APFO Approval Types

Type	Application	Scope of Review
Initial	Concept Plans for Comprehensive Planned Developments (CPDs), and Planned Residential Unit developments (PRUs), Preliminary Development Plans (PDP), Some Special Exceptions (SPXs)	Transportation Impact (may exclude some site-specific design review that requires more detailed design), Schools, Fire/emergency, Water, and Sewer.
Detailed	Use Permit (USE), some SPXs, Detailed Applications, Preliminary Subdivision Plans	Requirements of Initial Approval (if not previously approved) plus transportation analyses that require detailed site-specific design.
Final	Building Permit	Water and Sewer evaluated by City to ensure that capacity is still available. Other detailed approval elements are not retested.

All new development applications filed after the effective date of this Ordinance are subject to its provisions. Any development applications filed prior to the effective date will be reviewed based on the standards and requirements in effect at that time, except as provided in section II.B below.

II. Process

Determining whether or not a development project provides “adequate” public facilities is dependent on the City’s standard level of performance of a public facility, which is referred to as a Level of Service (LOS). The impacts of a development project must not be so great that they negatively impact citizens’ quality of life beyond certain thresholds. The thresholds, or standards, have been established by the City for various public facilities (transportation, schools, fire protection, water supply, and sewer) and are outlined in detail in the following sections.

The following are procedures used by the City to ensure that adequate public facility systems exist during and after a development project:

- During review of any development project, the City will check to ensure that capacities of public facility systems are adequate, as defined in this document, through all phases, including at the completion of the development.
- To ensure that approved but not yet built development does not use all of the available capacity required to maintain adequate LOS, the City will approve firm schedules for the implementation of multi-phase development projects. In other cases, the expiration dates established in the Zoning Ordinance for the particular type of development application will determine the service commitment.
- If a development project does not provide adequate public facilities, it is either denied or approved with special conditions.

This general framework is described in further detail in the body of this document.

II.A. Development Projects and Capacity Schedules

Table II outlines the stages at which different public facilities are evaluated against prior approvals and when capacity is reserved. If a developer fails to meet the predetermined service commitment for use of reserved capacity, APFO approval lapses.

TABLE II: Facility Capacity Schedules

Facility Type	Capacity Schedule
Transportation	Application approval reserves transportation capacity; capacity moves from the reserved to the used category once staff determines that the site is fully operational.
Schools	Project approval, subdivision approval or use permit approval reserves the capacity; at the building permit stage capacity is moved from the reserved to the used category.
Fire/Emergency	Application approval reserves the capacity; at the building permit stage capacity is moved from the reserved to the used category.
Water	Project approval, subdivision approval or use permit approval reserves the capacity; at the building permit stage capacity is moved from the reserved to the used category.
Sewer	Project approval, subdivision approval or use permit approval reserves the capacity; at the building permit stage capacity is moved from the reserved to the used category.

A binding service commitment attached to the validity periods, as defined in the Zoning Ordinance or as approved for multi-phase projects, is a critical component of the system for reserving capacity for proposed projects. The consequence of failure to comply with the validity period or service commitment is that the developer is required to reapply for that capacity before proceeding with the project or with the uncompleted portions of the project.

For a multi-phase project, the service commitment allocates the capacity for a set period of time for specific phases. Capacity allocations expire automatically according to the service commitment unless the original approving body determines that an extension is warranted.

II.B. Approved, Not-Completed Development Projects

There are several multi-phase projects in the City that have received development approvals prior to this APFO. At the time these projects were approved, there was no requirement for a completion schedule.

Development projects approved under a special development procedure (CPD, PDP, RTH, PRU, Cluster Development, Variable Lot Size, I-3 Optional Method of Development) is subject to review and implementation of adequate public facilities as specified in the following provisions. The length of time for which facilities are deemed adequate under these approvals may vary for each public facility. The validity period for determining the adequacy of public facilities is as follows:

- a. The number of years specified in the original approval, if explicitly stated; or

- b. If the original approval does not specify the number of years that public facilities are deemed adequate, the validity period ends fifteen (15) years from (effective date of the APFO) if all required public improvements have not been provided. If all required public improvements have been provided, an additional 5 years shall be granted.

The Mayor and Council may approve up to two (2) five-year extensions to implement the approved development project when the applicant demonstrates that development has proceeded with due diligence but that factors beyond the control of the developer such as a economic conditions or change in governmental regulations have precluded development of the property within the approved time frame or that the project is substantially complete.

If the adequate public facility approval is no longer valid, then the development must retest the relevant public facilities, with credit for provided facilities, prior to approval of subsequent detailed applications, use permits, or final record plats.

III. Levels of Service

III.A. Transportation

Currently, mobility throughout the City of Rockville is limited due to traffic congestion generated by local and regional trips. Regional growth, combined with anticipated development activity within the City will stress the existing and proposed infrastructure. In addition, Rockville's roadway system is essentially built out. Locations that currently contain the worst congestion levels generally require multi-million dollar improvements to solve the problem. Alternatively, these areas will require an increased reliance on non-vehicular improvements to increase the capacity of a multi-modal transportation system. However, in less densely developed areas of the City where traffic operates at acceptable LOS, many small-scale intersection improvements can still occur.

The City's Master Plan provides a vision for a shift from an auto-centric transportation system to a multi-modal system that serves motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. Through stated goals and objectives, it aims to create a transportation system that is safe and accessible, provides mobility for all users, and accommodates anticipated local and regional demands. To address all modes of transportation, the City has implemented a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) for new development projects. The CTR focuses on auto, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle levels of service, as well as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs. The CTR requires a Transportation Report (TR) be submitted with all development applications. The TR consists of five components: an examination of existing conditions, a site access and circulation analysis, an automobile traffic analysis a non-auto off-site analysis, , and proposed mitigation and credits. The analysis included in the TR is based on the type of development project and projected site trip generation(s). Development projects in the City that generate more than 30 peak hour auto trips, as defined in the CTR, must submit all five (5) components of the TR. Development projects that generate less than 30 peak hour auto trips do not need to provide the automobile traffic analysis and the non-auto off-site analysis. The TR report is used to test if the development project meets APF standards.

The following are principles used by the City to ensure that adequate transportation facilities exist during and after a development project:

- In order to address increased congestion and to encourage development activity where viable transportation options exist, the City has established Transit-Oriented Areas (TOA's) and non Transit-Oriented Areas (non-TOA's), as approved by the Mayor and Council. Areas defined as TOA's must include existing or programmed facilities that provide multi-modal access. TOA's include areas 7/10ths of a mile accessible walking distance from existing and programmed Metro and MARC stations and programmed fixed-guideway transit stations on dedicated transit rights-of-way. A map of the TOA's is attached in Appendix B and shows walking distances of 7/10ths of a mile from fixed-guideway transit stations.
- Transit-Oriented Areas (TOA's) and non-Transit-Oriented Areas (non-TOA's) have different thresholds. More congestion is allowed in TOA's, where viable multi-modal options exist. Stricter congestion standards are applied in non-TOA's where less congestion is mandated.

- Development projects in TOA's can claim larger amounts of credit for multi-modal transportation improvements and TDM programs and/or contributions than development projects in non-TOA's.

At the preliminary plan, detailed application, or use permit review stage there must be a detailed transportation capacity analysis following the CTR. If transportation facilities are found to be inadequate, as defined in the following sections, the proposed project will be denied. If transportation facilities are found to be adequate, or adequate subject to specified conditions, the project may be approved. Mitigation and other physical improvements may be required to meet APF standards through the normal development review process. Capacity for a development will be reserved after approval.

The Comprehensive Transportation Review Methodology was approved by the Mayor and Council on September 29, 2004. It replaced the Standard Traffic Methodology that had previously been utilized. The CTR policy is included by reference in the Adequate Public Facilities review for purposes of determining the adequacy of transportation facilities.

III.B. Schools

The Montgomery County Public Schools system has established a method of determining school capacity that it applies and reports as part of its annual Educational Facilities Master Plan (FY2006, App. H, and subsequent amendments). In general, the school system uses a planning capacity of 23 students per section for most K-5 students, with classrooms for special programs considered adequate at capacities ranging from 6:1 to 15:1 (Special Education Program) to 44:1. (1/2-day Kindergarten/Head Start); secondary schools use a capacity ratio of 22.5:1 (see MCPS FY2006, App. H.), which provides an objective basis for determining building capacity.

The APFO test for schools in Rockville is based on the program capacity for each school as defined by MCPS. Program capacity for class size is based on regular and supplemental programs for each school. The supplemental programs may include English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) as well as Class Size Reductions (CSR) to accommodate special populations at individual schools. Six of the elementary schools serving the City are subject to CSR provisions.

School demand is based on actual student census in the most recent complete academic year, adjusted for the following: demographic changes, changes in district boundaries and other changes anticipated by planners with Montgomery County Public Schools; additional demand from approved development; additional demand from the specific development being considered for approval. Developers may be required to obtain current certification of school capacities for individual clusters, because the annual figures reported to the Board of Education can rapidly be outdated.

(i) Levels of Service

A determination of the adequacy of public school capacity is based on the following principles:

- The program capacities determined annually by the Superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools, as reported to the Board of Education, shall be used as the capacity basis for the APFO program, based on 105 percent of program capacity at the elementary and middle school levels, and at 100 percent of program capacity for the high schools within 2 years;
- Within the City, capacity is based on a cluster of schools, using the clusters already established by the Montgomery County Public Schools; however “borrowing” of capacity from adjacent clusters will not be counted towards the adequacy of school capacity within the City. “Borrowing” of capacity within a cluster will not be counted towards adequacy of school capacity;
- Capacity temporarily taken off-line for rehabilitation and remodeling in accordance with the Montgomery County Public Schools Capital Improvements Program shall be considered available;
- Facilities shown on an adopted Capital Improvements Program with identified sources of funding and planned for completion within 2 years or less shall be considered available;

(ii) Regulatory Implementation

Note that school clusters in Rockville draw some of their enrollment from outside the City. Thus, for schools, the tracking system for enrollment – both from dwelling units built since the last annual MCPS capacity report and from pipeline projects – must be coordinated with the MCPS administration and Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission to ensure that the accounting includes new demand from outside the City, as well as the demand from within the City.

Capacities are available from the Montgomery County Public Schools annually and will be made available to prospective developers. It will be necessary to conduct a project-specific review for residential development projects simply to compute the projected demand from each development project.

III.C. Fire and Emergency Service Protection

Based on Calendar Year 2001 data, the average structure fire response time was 7 minutes and 25 seconds; the average EMS response time was 5 minutes and 56 seconds. Both of these are within the County Fire and Rescue Service goals for response time.

First response to any location in Rockville is possible within established response time goals. A full response calls for the availability of engines from at least 3 separate stations to arrive at the location within 10 minutes. With the programming of a new fire station at the Fire Training Academy, all areas of Rockville are within an 8-minute response time, based on data from the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS). The City now requires all new residential units to have sprinklers. Therefore, being on the fringe of the full response areas shall not be a determining factor for adequacy of fire protection for new residential development activity. However, certain sensitive types of uses shall likely be subject to such a standard, as much for ambulance/rescue services as for fire protection.

Certain higher-risk uses shall be allowed only where a full response from 3 stations within 10 minutes is possible. Such uses would include schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and places of assembly seating more than 500. Clearly the public risk issues are much greater in dealing with such uses and there is thus a logical basis to require that an optimal fire or EMS response be available to any such use that is established in the future.

(i) Levels of Service

The following higher-risk uses shall be allowed only where a full response from 3 stations within 10 minutes is possible: schools; hospitals; nursing homes; commercial buildings over 3 stories high with no sprinklers; places of assembly seating more than 500.

(ii) Regulatory Implementation

Service areas will be determined based on the latest data provided by MCFRS.

III.D. Water Supply

The APFO requires denial of any development that would create total water demand in the City that would exceed available supply less a reasonable reserve for fire-flow.

(i) Levels of Service

Any proposed development that would create total water demand in the City that would exceed available supply less a reasonable reserve for fire-flow shall not be approved.

Any proposed development for which a minimum fire-flow of 1,000 gallons per minute, or where such fire-flow will not be available from hydrants located within 500 feet of any structure within the development not provided with sprinklers, shall not be approved.

(ii) Regulatory Implementation

Final check-off for adequacy of water service will be determined prior to the issuance of building permits.

III.E. Sewer Service

The APFO provisions require denial of any development project that would cause the City to exceed the transmission capacity in any part of the sewerage system or the treatment capacity available to it at the Blue Plains Treatment Plant or other facilities provided by WSSC.

(i) Levels of Service

Any proposed development that would cause the City to exceed the treatment capacity available to it at the Blue Plains Treatment Plant or other facilities provided by WSSC shall not be approved.

Any development for which transmission capacity in the City or WSSC system to Blue Plains or another treatment facility will not be available concurrently with the anticipated demand shall not be approved.

(ii) Regulatory Implementation

Final check-off for adequacy of water service will be determined prior to the issuance of building permits.

Sources

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Appendix A: Definitions

<i>Development Project</i>	Any new development or significant redevelopment project presented to the City after (date of APF adoption).
<i>CTR</i>	Comprehensive Transportation Review describes the process by which to proceed with development or redevelopment within the City. Principles and methodologies explained in the CTR are used by the City to evaluate the transportation impacts of development applications on site access and circulation, multi-modal facilities, and off-site automobile traffic. Mitigation measures to alleviate negative impacts are also addressed.
<i>Transportation Report (TR)</i>	<p>Transportation Report, required by the CTR, is one report that consists of five components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component A: Introduction and Existing Conditions: Project description. • Component B: Site Access & Circulation: Analysis of internal circulation, entrance configurations, truck access and other relevant access and on-site features. • Component C: Automobile Traffic Analysis: Analysis of auto traffic using the technical guidelines for traffic analysis in the auto study area. • Component D: Non-Auto Off-Site Analysis: Analysis of access to alternative modes of transportation available in the respective study area for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities in the multi-modal study area. • Component E: Summary and Mitigation: Summary of the report findings and recommendations.
<i>Service Commitment</i>	Public facility capacity reserved as part of project approval
<i>TOA</i>	Areas defined as TOA's must include existing or programmed facilities that provide multi-modal access. TOA's include areas 7/10ths of a mile accessible walking distance from existing and programmed Metro and MARC stations and programmed fixed-guideway transit stations on dedicated transit rights-of-way.
<i>TDM</i>	Transportation Demand Management is a general term for strategies that promote alternatives to travel by single occupancy vehicle.
<i>USE</i>	Use Permit
<i>CPD</i>	Comprehensive Plan Development
<i>PDP</i>	Preliminary Development Plan
<i>SPX</i>	Special Exception
<i>PRU</i>	Planned Residential Unit
<i>Subdivision</i>	The creation of lots, either by dividing existing lots or parcels or combining existing lots, for the purpose of new development or redevelopment

Appendix B: Map of Transit-Oriented Areas

Appendix C: High School Cluster Boundaries Map and School Capacity Projections

Appendix D: Map of Fire and Rescue Service Response Times

